



BEYOND SENSORY EXPERIENCE "Urmula" CD, 2003 OLD EUROPA CAFE

Just a few months back we reviewed here the hot CD that supposed the debut for this new project of the infamous MZ.412's Drakhon, and here we have the new, central instalment in the trilogy of BSE. I won't abound adding dozens of details about the collaboration between K. Meizter and the referred Industrial star (if such a thing exists); for those curious, look for our preceding review on the past issue in our site, where you'll can infer the rest of the info you may be looking for.

So, right to the disc, here we have 8 tracks and almost 50 minutes that continue the droning legacy of the previous chapter conceptually, aesthetically and, of course, sonorously. And the pilgrimage commences with an eloquent statement that defines quite nicely the intention of the project. 'A New Kind Of Science' initially is a succession of low cadenced blurred tones, reverberating deep pulsations and feedback. The amount of sounds is pretty ample, and they appear substituting each other with the development of the piece with a very fluid result. Over the half, a sombre piano appears and the atmosphere turns quiet, but the vocal samples and the return of the opening sounds bring back the former ambiance. The second piece, 'Arbogast', provides some symphonic samples, dramatic and dark; maybe a bit typical for the original sound of BSE, in the Swedish vein of the Cold Meat Industry's Dark Ambient during the middle and late 90's, which make it deserve such popular status of indispensable label. The rest are the obscure layers you may expect plus growling and raw voices, but more classical sampled melodies join the composition, more complex than just a looped sequence to say all the truth. In 'The Two-Trace Problem' we find a melodic succession of low strings over a static droning with an occasional female voice. The idea may sound too simple, but the result is as subtle (BSE is constantly full of subtle elaboration) and effective as always; with a nice development and structure. '28.9.11.9' is conversely denser in sound, mostly because of its seashore recordings, more sampled voices and even some rhythm, slowly cadenced.

The second half of the album commences with 'Celestial Disharmonies' and a pulsating bass, a gritty layer and a classic melody on top. Here the female voice (yes, again) plays a main role along the more intense start, though during the last couple of minutes everything turns calmed, with just the lowest notes interacting (i.e. pulsations plus melody). 'Filth Discipline' has some typical looping low-pitched sample in the beginning that soon turns into a melancholic piano melody far more interesting with some repetitive knocks added. Within a sort of cyclic development, the initial source and piano will return after a while, though it's a not a looped sequence. Over the second half we find new elements, sonorous sources (is that an airplane?) that change the discourse. In 'Urmula', drones and the occasional appearance of a drum pattern, together with some melodic metallic sound, like chimes, interact appearing and disappearing, finding their way. The last minutes shows another of those desolate quiet tunes you can find in BSE quite often and that, in my opinion, are the best side of their couple of discs. And nicely 'Curtains' starts with one of those, soon devoured by a monotonous deep pattern for several minutes (in fact this is the longest track: 9:03), slowly we find feedback resonances or something similar, everything restrained. Two minutes before it ends, a whisper stops the march and apparently the whole album, though it still lasts like a minute and half for the player to stop; but from there everything is silence until an ultra-filtered voice sentences. The disc started with a message and brings to a close with a new, pretty different and altered one; the procedure of the metamorphosis is concluded.

As I've already mentioned, a reference to the artwork deserves to be made. Pretty close to the symbolism of the prior one, though abounding on a more classic imagery and substituting the white impression on black background for its contrary. Very classy digipak, really.

If 'Tortuna' was one the biggest surprise of the current year, 'Urmula' is no less in terms of quality. I myself find a somewhat noticeable different approach, less original to a certain extent, more classical-oriented (while the precedent showed some similarities with sporadic, more innovative Post-Rock ambiences); though the final outcome results a first-rate continuation for probably the most brilliant pack in some time, and retains the initial idea and spirit fairly well. Be sure to stay tuned since 'Ratan', the closing chapter should be out before the end of the year, this time released also in a special edition within a luxury wooden box (under the name of 'Korrelations'), including a CD-R as a bonus that will contain extra material and remixes by special guests. Limited, of course... Give it a listen and feel the charm before it's too late; a blend of states of mind that becomes alchemy for the 21st Century.

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